

MARVEL



IRON MAN

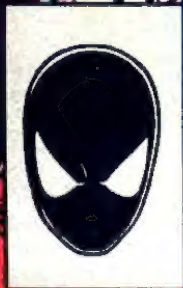
**THE ENEMY
WITHIN!**

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JUNE



BYRON H. HAY

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE GREATEST OF THE SPACEKNIGHTS--ROM!

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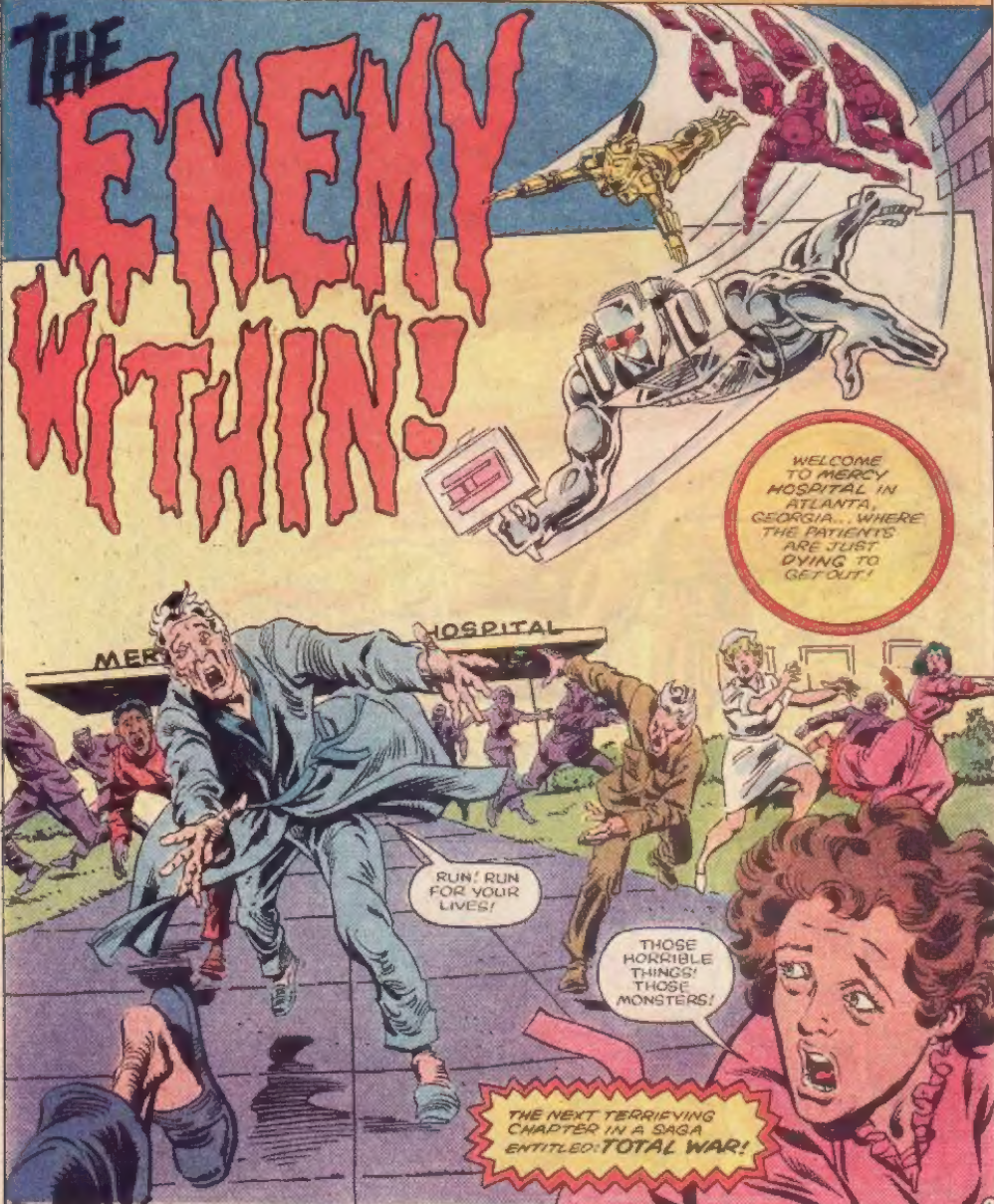
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THE ENEMY WITHIN!



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NO ONE NEEDED TO TELL ROM, HIS SISTER-SPACEKNIGHT STARSHINE, AND THE WRAITH-HUNTER RANGERS OF PROJECT WRAITHWATCH THAT THEIR ALIEN ENEMY WOULD STRIKE AGAIN AT HUMANKIND... AND STRIKE SOON.

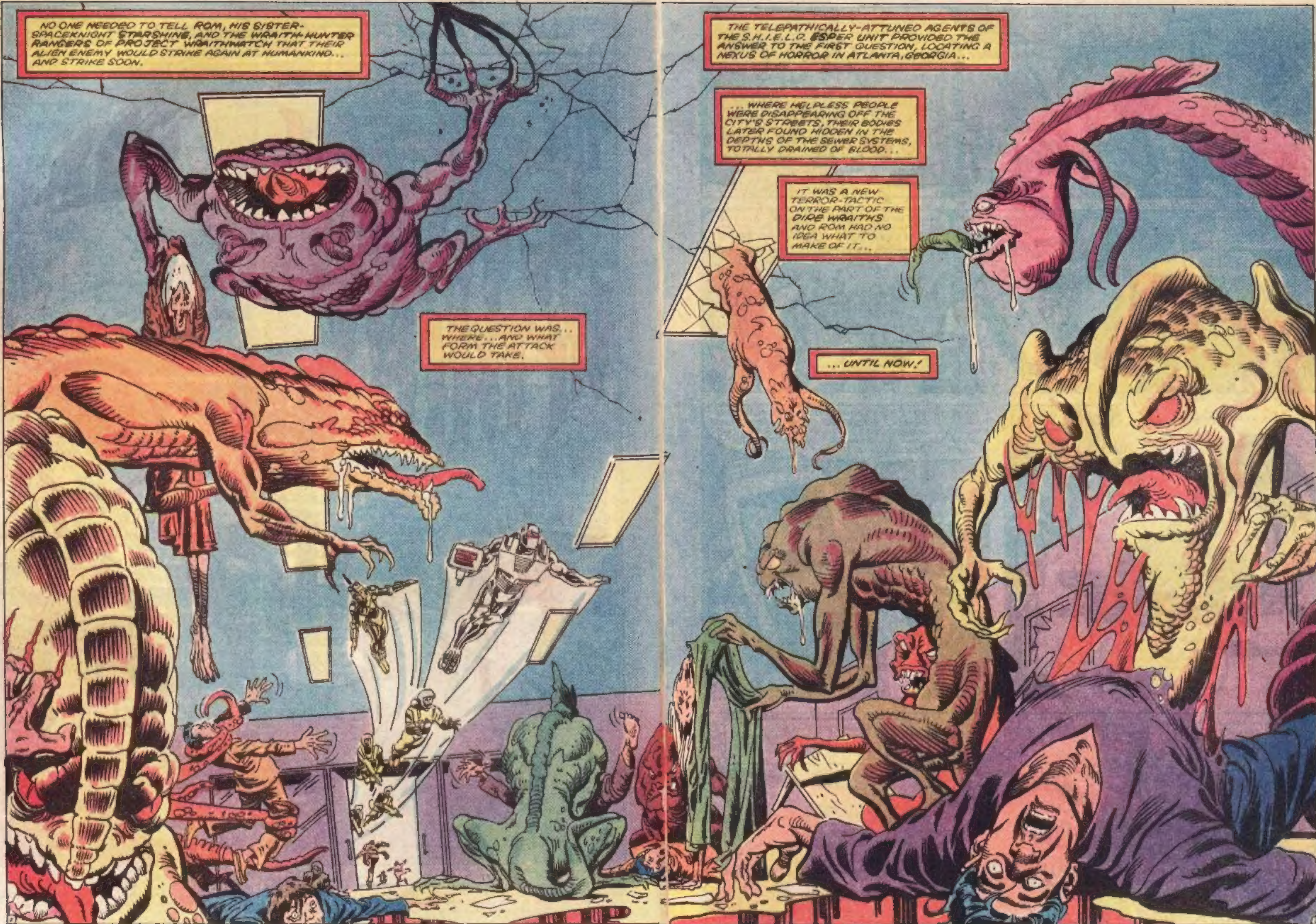
THE QUESTION WAS... WHERE... AND WHAT FORM THE ATTACK WOULD TAKE.

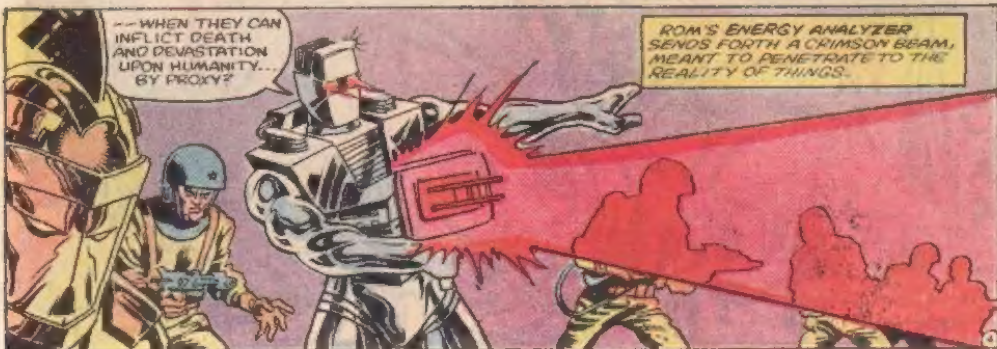
THE TELEPATHICALLY-ATTUNED AGENTS OF THE S.H.I.E.L.D. ESPER UNIT PROVIDED THE ANSWER TO THE FIRST QUESTION, LOCATING A NEXUS OF HORROR IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA...

...WHERE HELPLESS PEOPLE WERE DISAPPEARING OFF THE CITY'S STREETS, THEIR BODIES LATER FOUND HIDDEN IN THE DEPTHS OF THE SEWER SYSTEMS, TOTALLY DRAINED OF BLOOD...

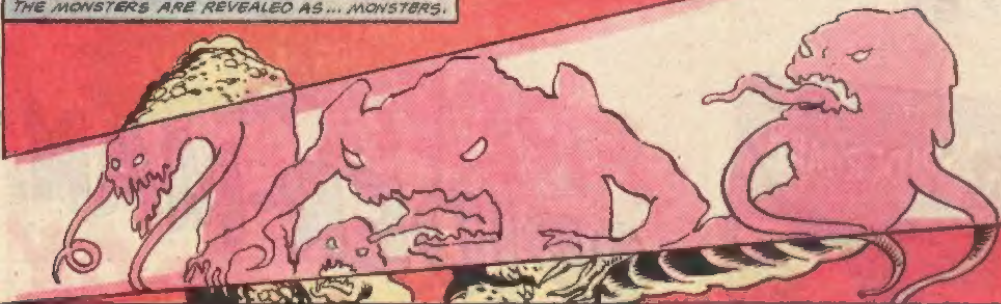
IT WAS A NEW TERROR-TACTIC ON THE PART OF THE DISE WRAITHS AND ROM HAD NO IDEA WHAT TO MAKE OF IT...

...UNTIL NOW!





BATHED IN THE NEUTRALIZERS BRILLIANCE,
THE MONSTERS ARE REVEALED AS... MONSTERS.



WE DIDN'T
NEED
YOUR
ANALYZER
TO TELL US
THEY'RE
CREATURES!

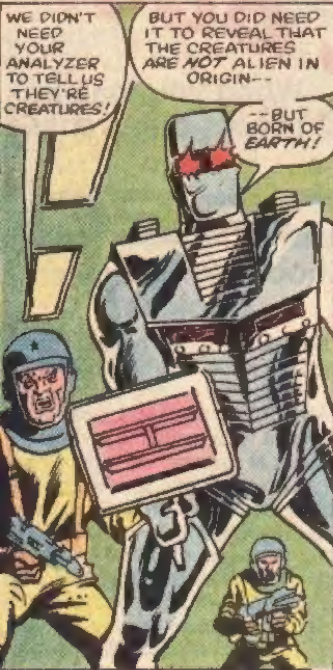
BUT YOU DID NEED
IT TO REVEAL THAT
THE CREATURES
ARE NOT ALIEN IN
ORIGIN--

--BORN OF
EARTH!

THE RANGERS STAND STUNNED,
UNABLE TO BELIEVE WHAT
ROM HAS TOLD THEM, UNABLE
TO BRING THEMSELVES TO
FIRE UPON CREATURES W
WHOM THEY SHARE A
COMMON ANCESTRY.

ARE YOU TRYING
TO TELL ME THAT
THOSE CREATURES
ARE HUMAN?!

IF THEY WERE,
THEY ARE HUMAN
NO LONGER!



HOWEVER, IF THE CREATURES RECOGNIZE THAT THEY WERE ONCE HUMAN, THEY SHOW IT NOT, AND
THE ONLY BOND THEY SEEK TO FORGE BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND THE RANGERS... IS THE
COMMINGLING OF THEIR BLOOD.



FIGHT BACK, RANGERS!
FIGHT IN SELF-DEFENSE!

AND BLAST
THE WRAITHS FOR
FORCING US TO
TAKE THE VERY
LIVES WE'D COME
TO SAVE!



YES, CURSE
THE WRAITHS!
CURSE THEM
TO PERDITION!
WILLIFY THEIR
NAMES...

...BUT DEVOTE THE GREATER
PART OF YOUR ENERGY TO
DESTROYING THEM AND THEIR
EVIL WORKS!

BUT THE EVIL
WE DESTROY THIS
DAY WAS
HUMAN ONCE,
STARSHINE.



IT IS HUMAN NO
LONGER, ROM!

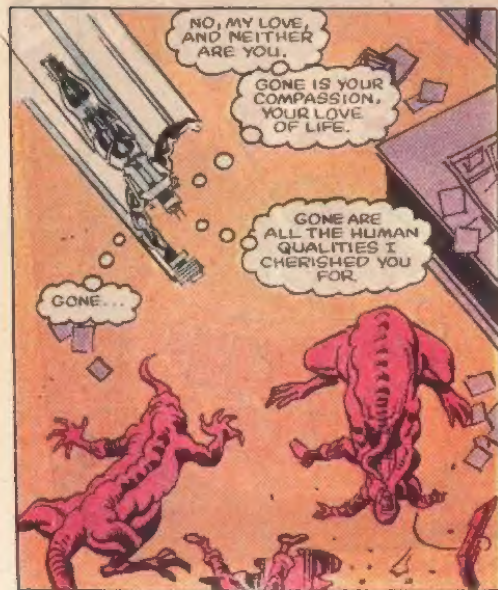


NO, MY LOVE,
AND NEITHER
ARE YOU.

GONE IS YOUR
COMPASSION,
YOUR LOVE
OF LIFE.

GONE ARE
ALL THE HUMAN
QUALITIES I
CHERISHED YOU
FOR

GONE...

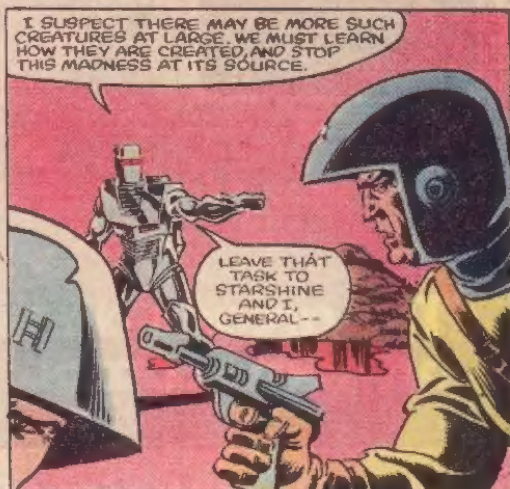
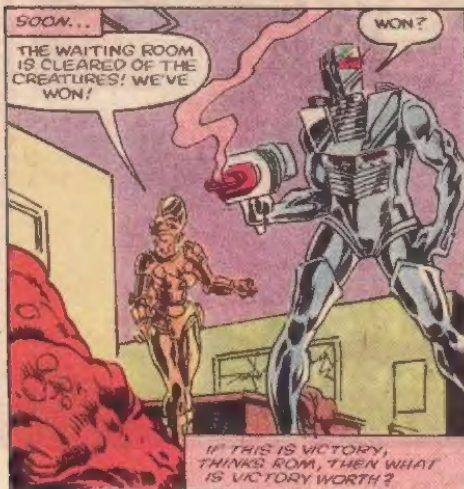


... A CASUALTY
OF THIS WICKED
WAR THE WRAITHS
NOW WAGE UPON
YOUR WORLD.

SORROW WELLS IN THE
SILVER KNIGHT'S
CYBORG BREAST, SORROW
FOR EVERYTHING HE HAS
LOVED AND LOST...



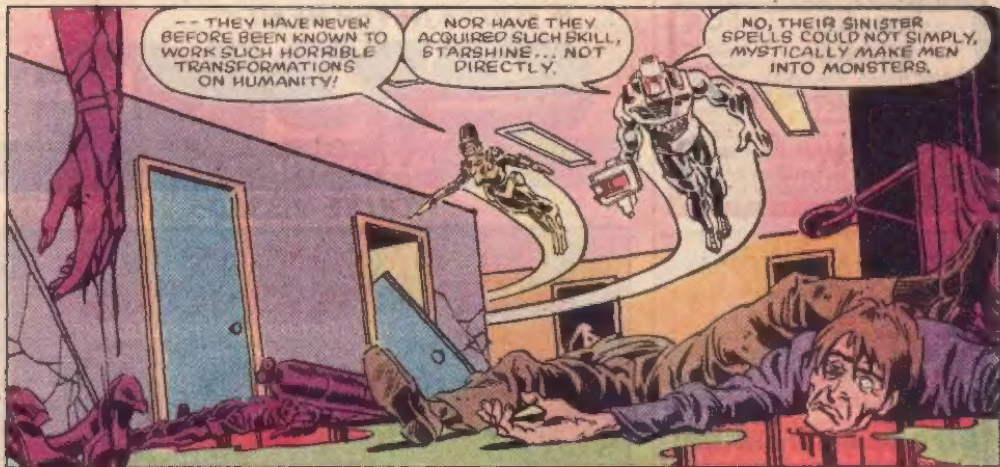
INCLUDING HIS OWN HUMANITY, OF WHICH HE IS MADE MINDFUL AS HE TRAINS THE BRUTAL BEAM OF HIS NEUTRALIZER UPON THE CREATURES, SENDING THEM INTO THE REALM OF LIMBO RATHER THAN DESTROYING THEM.



-- THEY HAVE NEVER BEFORE BEEN KNOWN TO WORK SUCH HORRIBLE TRANSFORMATIONS ON HUMANITY!

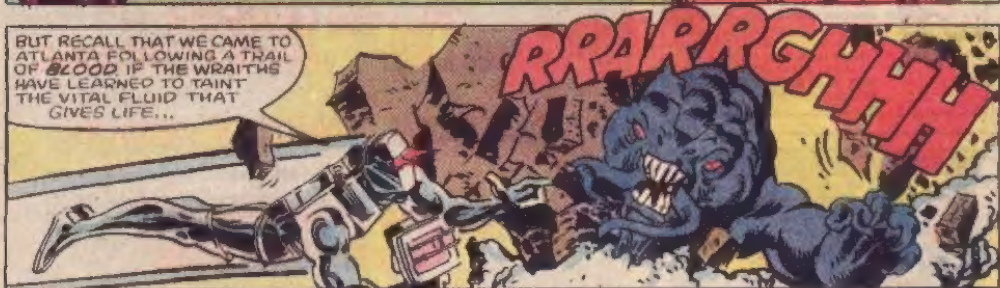
NOR HAVE THEY ACQUIRED SUCH SKILL, STARSHINE... NOT DIRECTLY.

NO, THEIR SINISTER SPELLS COULD NOT SIMPLY, MYSTICALLY MAKE MEN INTO MONSTERS.



BUT RECALL THAT WE CAME TO ATLANTA FOLLOWING A TRAIL OF BLOOD IF THE WRAITHS HAVE LEARNED TO TAINT THE VITAL FLUID THAT GIVES LIFE...

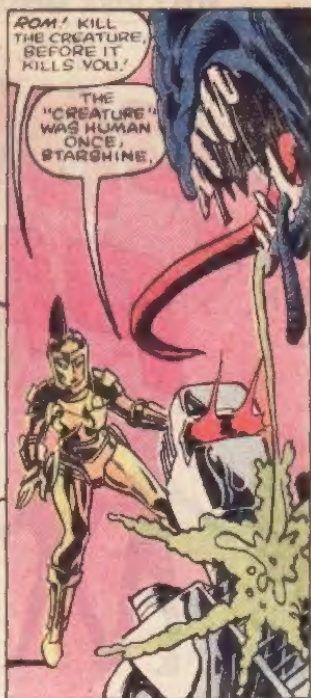
RRARRGHHH



... THEN MIGHT THEY NOT HAVE LEARNED HOW TO TRIGGER A TRANSFORMATION IN MANKIND ITSELF -- FROM WITHIN!

ROM! KILL THE CREATURE, BEFORE IT KILLS YOU!

THE "CREATURE" WAS HUMAN ONCE, STARSHINE.



HAVE I THE RIGHT TO DENY IT ITS CHANCE TO PERHAPS BECOME HUMAN AGAIN?



YOU HAVE
THE RIGHT TO
PRESERVE
YOUR OWN
LIFE!

YOU HAVE THE
RIGHT TO BE A
SURVIVOR IN
THIS WAR, AND
NOT A VICTIM!



YOU HAVE THE
RIGHT TO LIVE!!

SKREEE

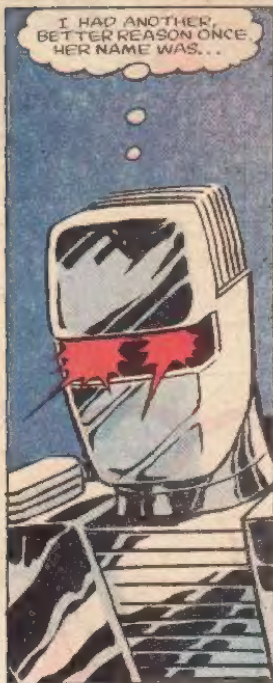


BUT WHAT GOOD
IS THAT RIGHT
UNLESS ONE HAS
A REASON TO
LIVE.

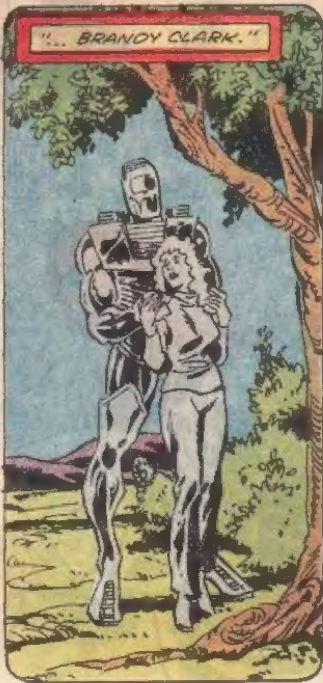
YOU HAVE A
REASON! WIPING
THE WRAITH-
SCUM FROM THE
FACE OF THE
EARTH!



I HAD ANOTHER,
BETTER REASON ONCE
HER NAME WAS...

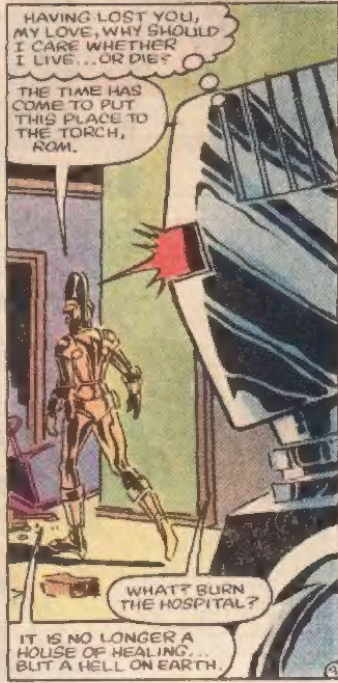


"... BRANDY CLARK."



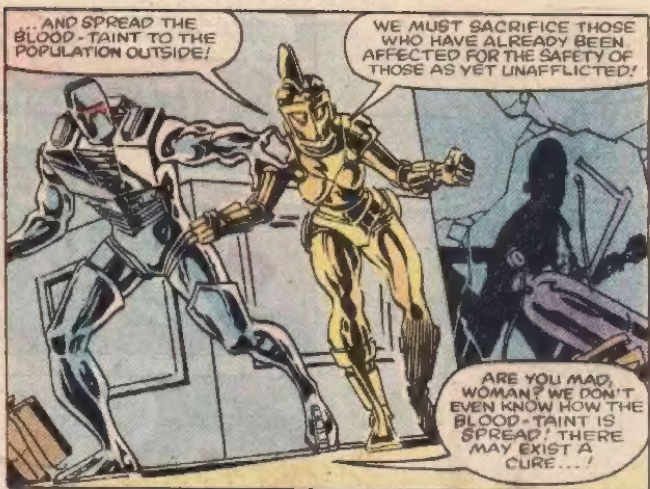
HAVING LOST YOU,
MY LOVE, WHY SHOULD
I CARE WHETHER
I LIVE...OR DIE?

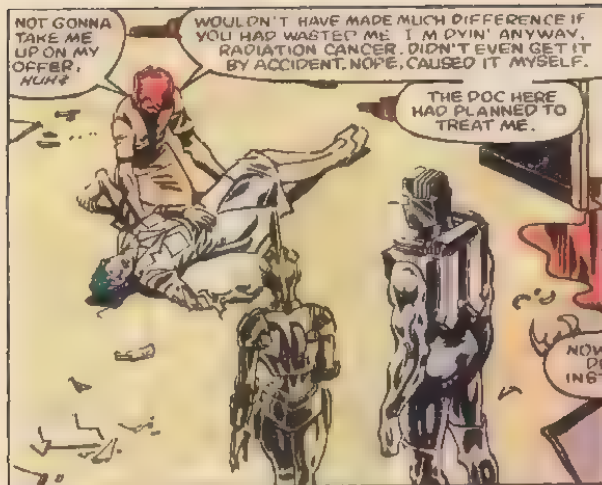
THE TIME HAS
COME TO PUT
THIS PLACE TO
THE TORCH,
ROM.



WHAT? BURN
THE HOSPITAL?

IT IS NO LONGER A
HOUSE OF HEALING...
BUT A HELL ON EARTH.





NOT GONNA
TAKE ME
UP ON MY
OFFER,
HULK?

WOULDN'T HAVE MADE MUCH DIFFERENCE IF
YOU HAD WASTED ME. I'M DYIN' ANYWAY.
RADIATION CANCER. DIDN'T EVEN GET IT
BY ACCIDENT. NOPE, CAUSED IT MYSELF.

THE DOC HERE
HAD PLANNED TO
TREAT ME.

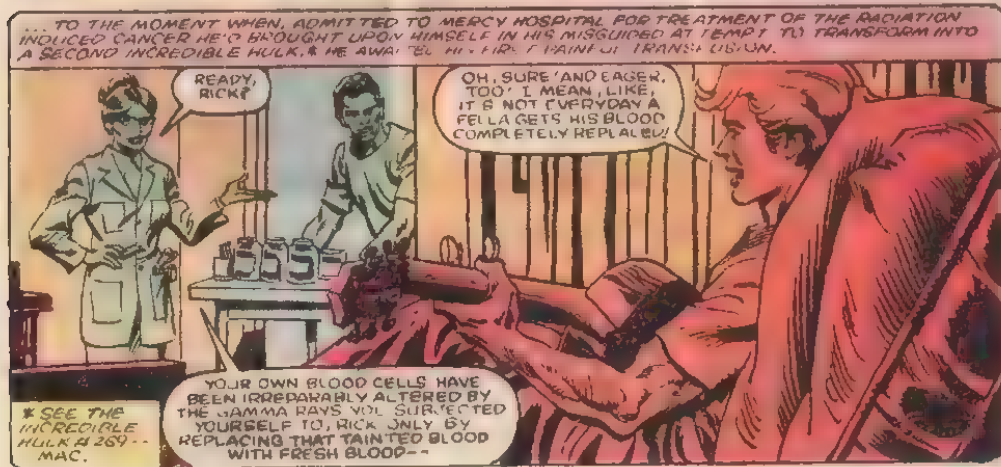
NOW SHE'S
DEAD
INSTEAD.



FATE'S SURE GOT
SOME SENSE OF HUMOR.
DON'T IT?

WHAT
HAPPENED
HERE?

RICK'S EYES WEAR A HAUNTED
EXPRESSION AS HE THINKS BACK A
MERE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS...

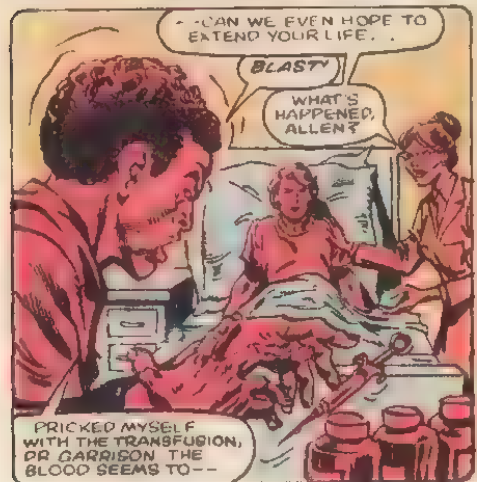


READY,
RICK?

OH, SURE 'ANDEAGER,
TOO'. I MEAN, LIKE,
IT'S NOT EVERYDAY A
FELLA GETS HIS BLOOD
COMPLETELY REPLACED!

*SEE THE
INCREDIBLE
HULK #269...
MAC.

YOUR OWN BLOOD CELLS HAVE
BEEN IRREPARABLY ALTERED BY
THE GAMMA RAYS YOU SUBJECTED
YOURSELF TO, RICK. ONLY BY
REPLACING THAT TAINED BLOOD
WITH FRESH BLOOD--

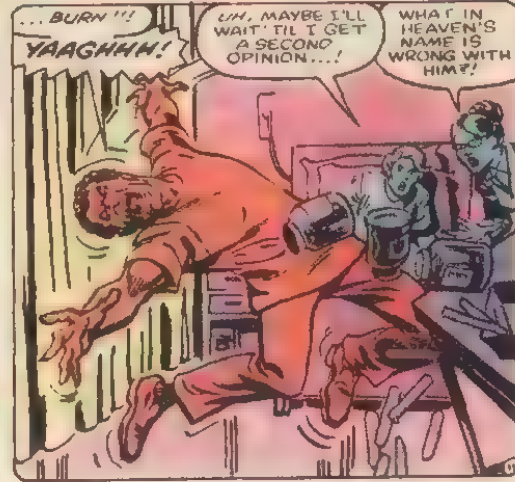


--CAN WE EVEN HOPE TO
EXTEND YOUR LIFE...

BLAST!

WHAT'S
HAPPENED,
ALLEN?

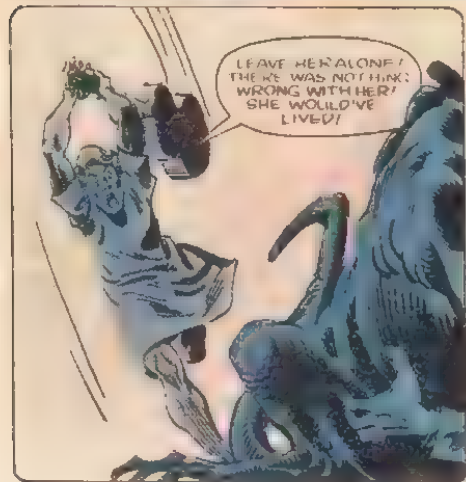
PRICKED MYSELF
WITH THE TRANSFUSION,
DR. GARRISON THE
BLOOD SEEMS TO--

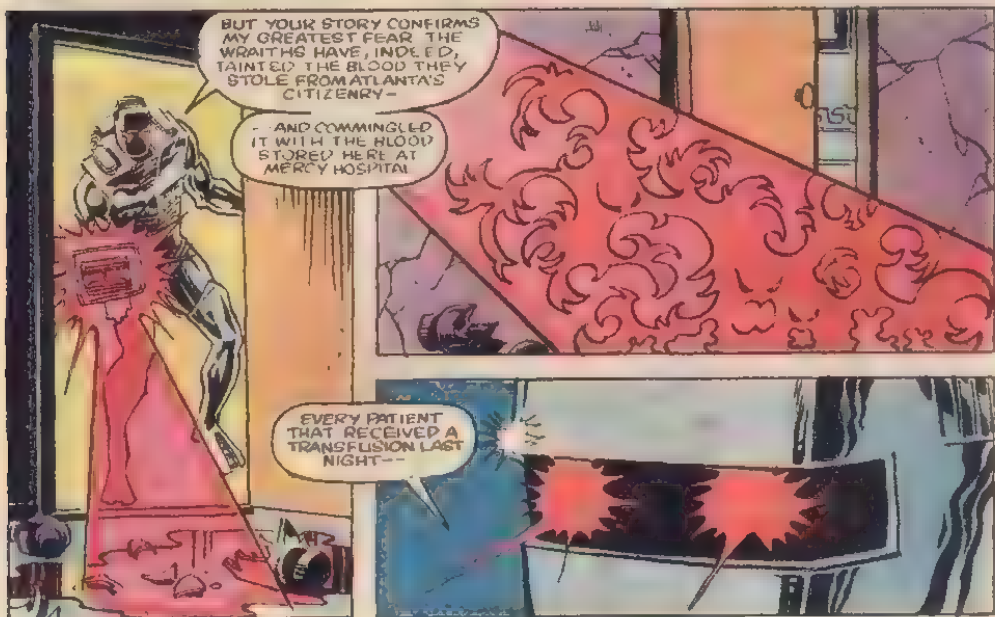
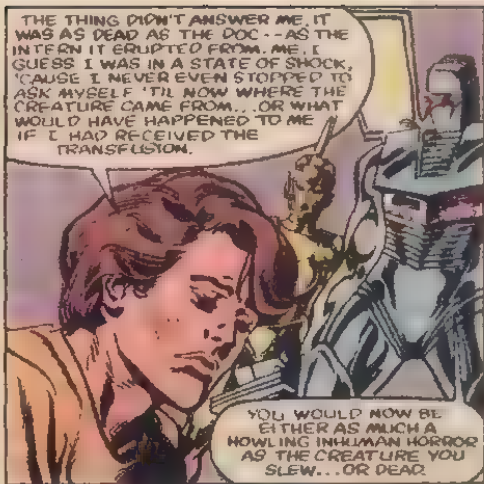


...BURN!!!
YAAGHHH!

UH, MAYBE I'LL
WAIT 'TIL I GET
A SECOND
OPINION...

WHAT IN
HEAVEN'S
NAME IS
WRONG WITH
HIM?





WRAITHS? DIRE WRAITHS! ALIEN INVADERS FROM THE DREAD DARK NEBULA, ROUTED BY ROM AND HIS FELLOW SPACEKNIGHTS, DRIVEN TO INFILTRATE OTHER WORLDS... INCLUDING OUR OWN.

MORE POWERFUL, PERHAPS. BUT LESS THAN HUMAN IN YOUR HEART, MY LOVE.

"OUR OWN?"

I WAS HUMAN AS YOU ONCE BEFORE THE WRAITH - WAR DEMANDED THAT I TAKE UP ARMS AS SOMETHING MORE!

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE HOSPITAL'S BLOOD SUPPLIES ARE STORED, HUMAN?

SURE, THE BLOOD BANK!

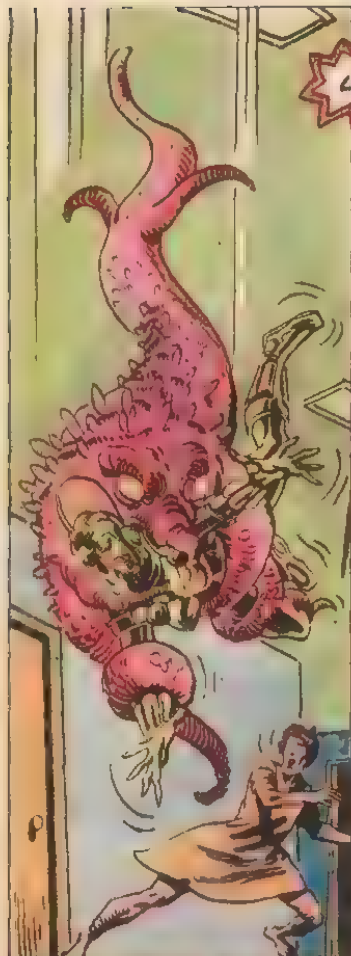
THEN THAT IS WHERE WE MUST SOAR, STARSHINE, TO STEM THIS TIDE OF HORROR AT ITS SOURCE!

ROM'S ROCKET POOL AND STARSHINE'S BOOT JETS SCREAM UPWARD THE MINUTELY SILENT HOSPITAL CORRIDORS.

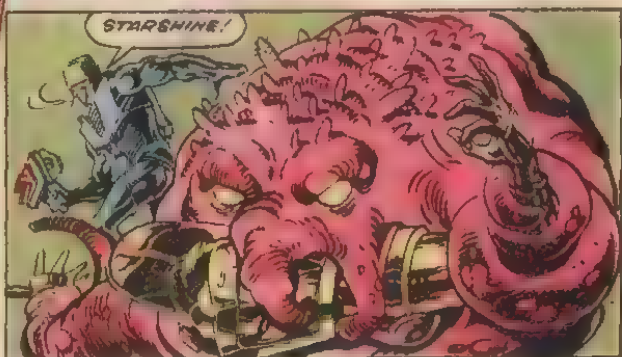
BUT IT IS THEIR VERY SPEED THAT BLINDS THEM TO THEIR DANGER...

... DANGER WHICH THE GLOWER RICK JONES IS THE FIRST TO SPY.

HEY SPACEKNIGHTS



LOOK OUT!!!

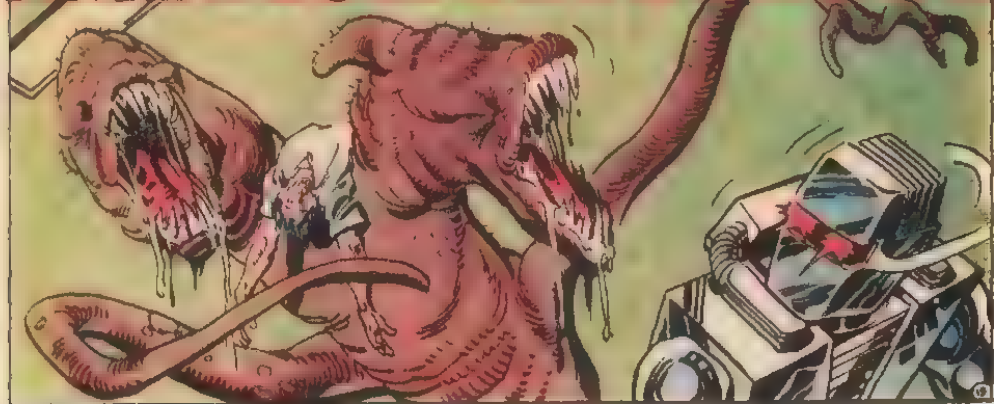


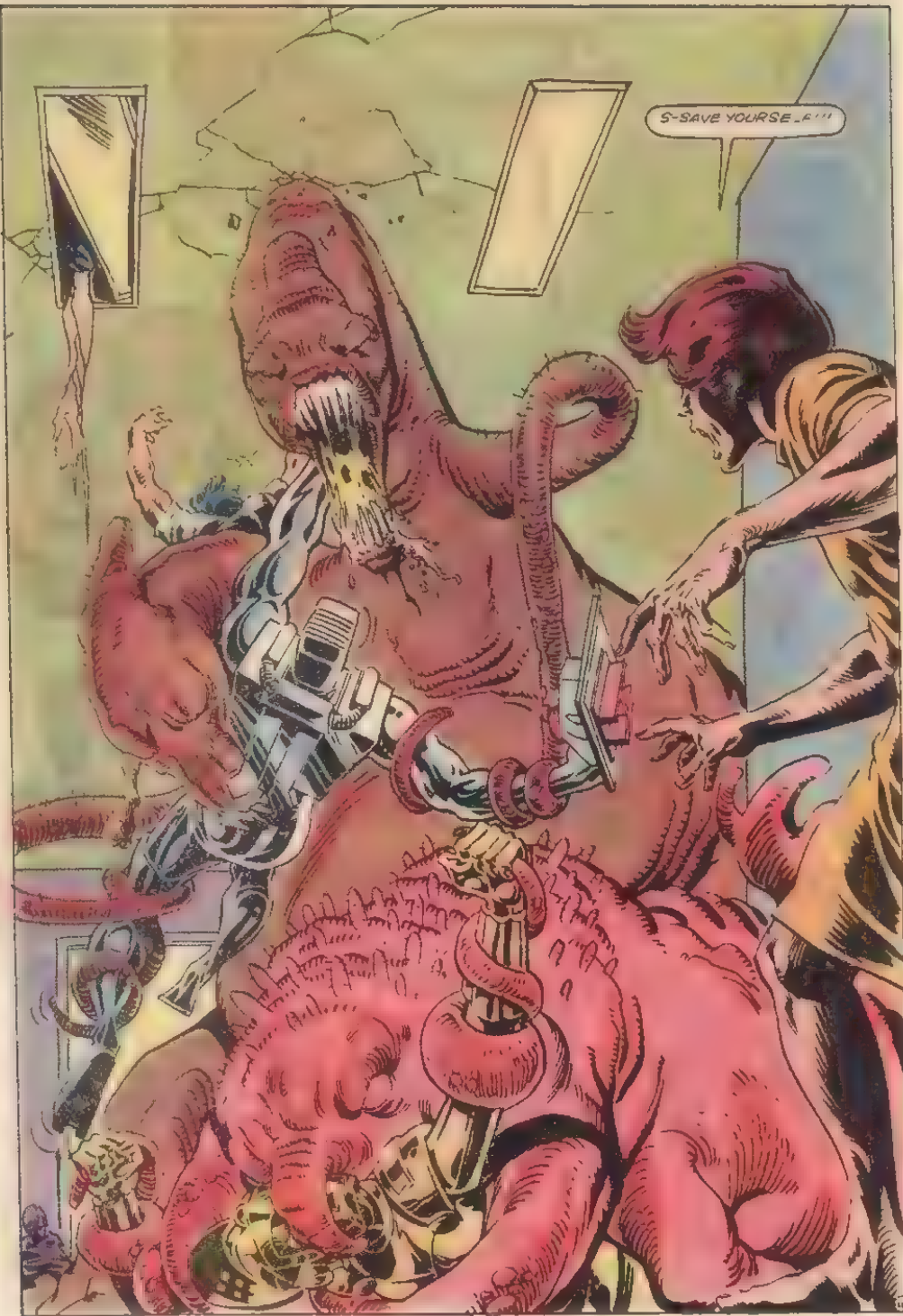
STARSHINE!

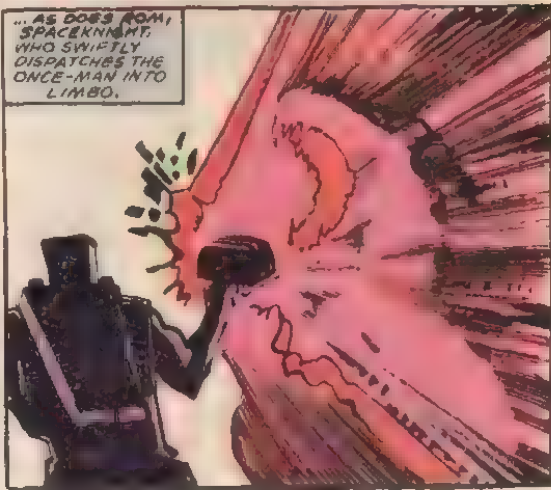
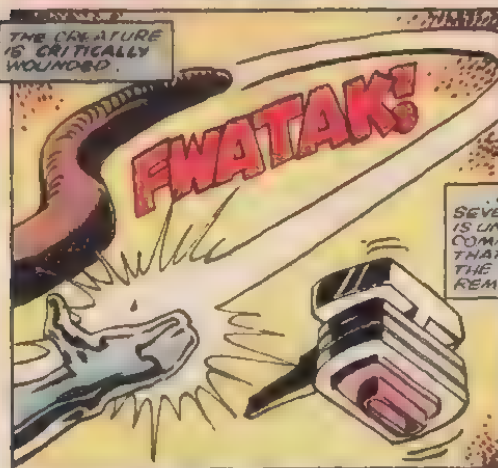
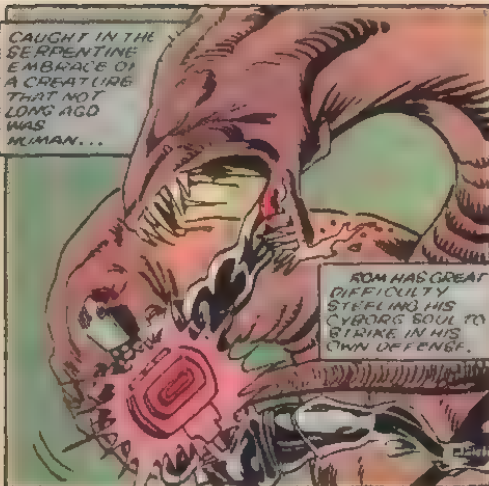


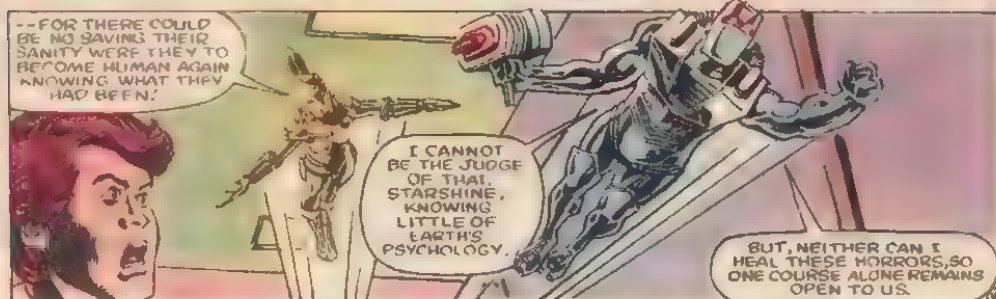
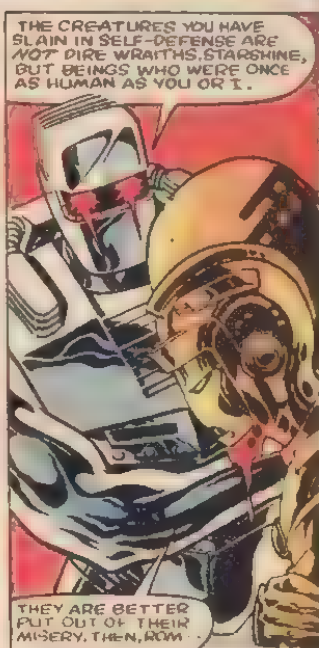
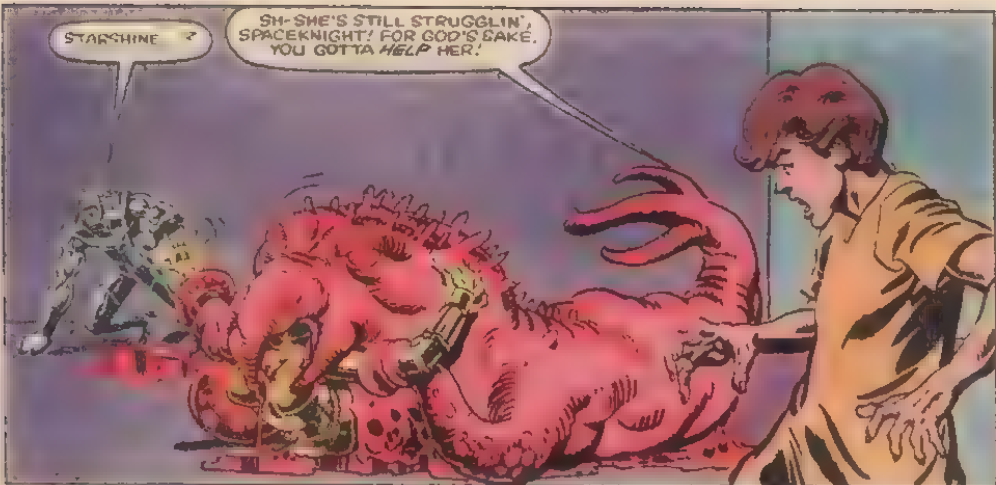
SAVE HER,
SPACEKNIGHT!

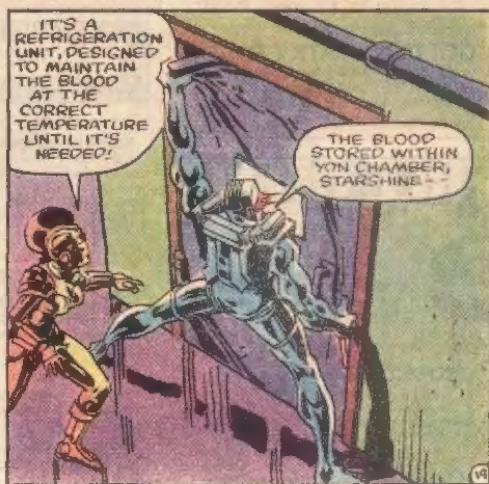
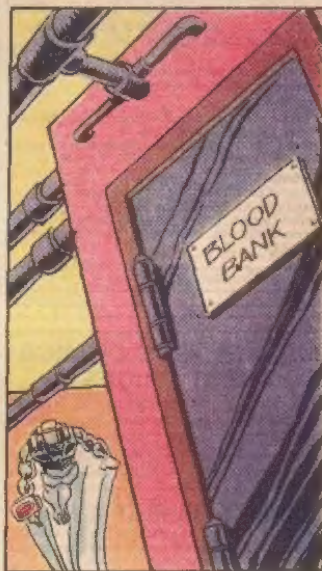
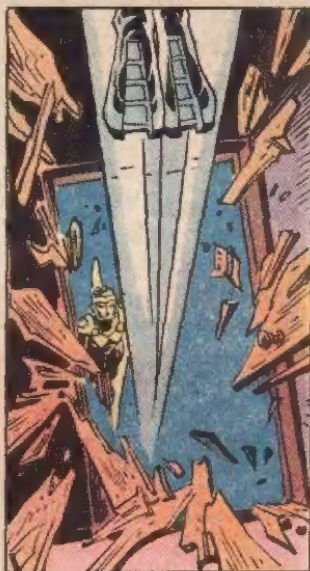
HRRRISSHHHHHHHHHHH!





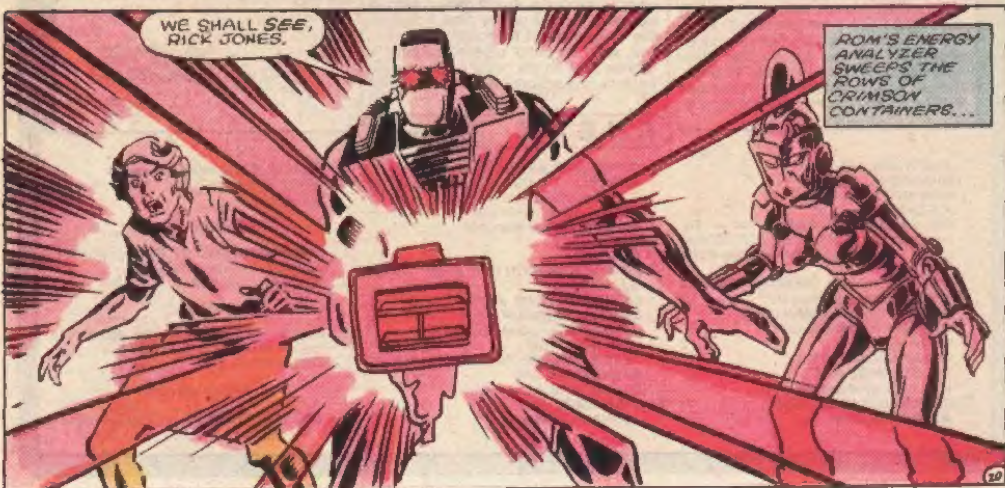
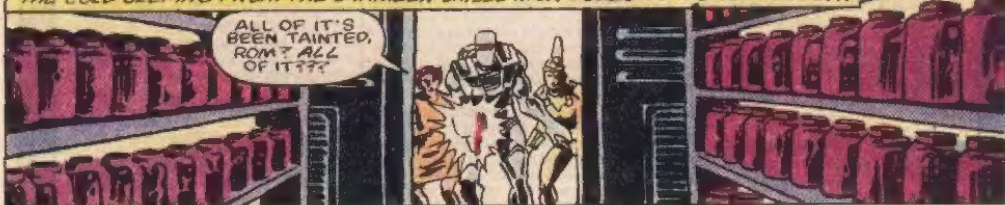








THE COLD SEEPING FROM THE CHAMBER CHILLS RICK JONES TO HIS VERY SOUL...



...ELIMINATING
ALL DOUBT.



ALL! EVERY CONTAINER!
ALL ALTERED! ALL
POLLUTED!



AND ALL MUST
BE DESTROYED!

HER LIGHTEYES SHINE!
STABBING FORTH IN ANGER!

THE HEAT AWAKENS THE
HORRORS LYING DORMANT
IN THE FROZEN BLOOD-
CELLS.



... AND SENSING THAT
IT MEANS TO DESTROY
THEM...

... THEY ACT TO INSURE
THEIR SURVIVAL!



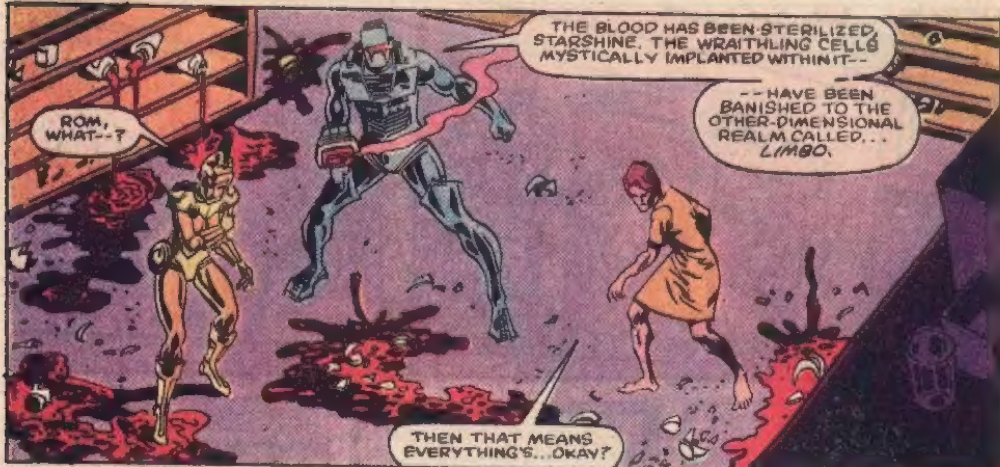
THE BLOOD--IT'S
SPLASHING ALL
OVER US!



IT CANNOT
HARM EITHER
STARSHINE OR
I, HUMAN--

--AND MY
NEUTRALIZER
SHALL INSURE
THAT IT
CAUSES NO
HARM TO YOU.



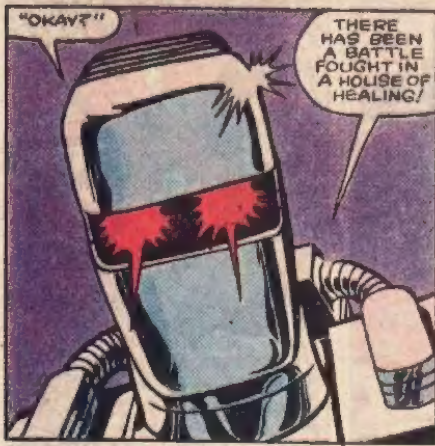


THE BLOOD HAS BEEN STERILIZED, STARSHINE. THE WRAITHLING CELLS MYSTICALLY IMPLANTED WITHIN IT--

-- HAVE BEEN BANISHED TO THE OTHER-DIMENSIONAL REALM CALLED... LIMBO.

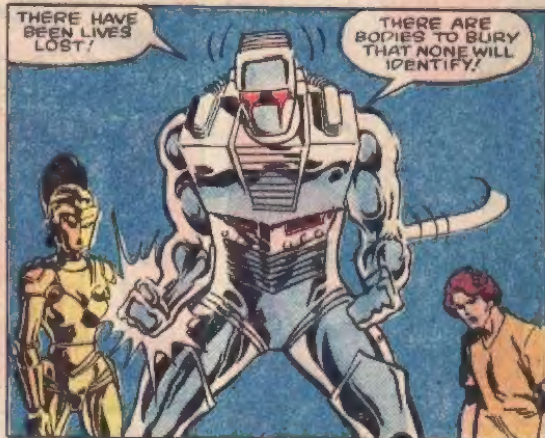
ROM, WHAT--?

THEN THAT MEANS EVERYTHING'S...OKAY?



"OKAY?"

THERE HAS BEEN A BATTLE FOUGHT IN A HOUSE OF HEALING!

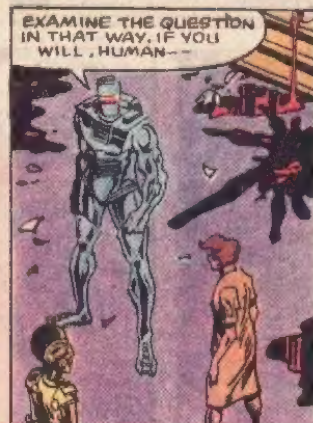


THERE HAVE BEEN LIVES LOST!

THERE ARE BODIES TO BURY THAT NONE WILL IDENTIFY!



THERE HAS BEEN HORROR HEAPED UPON HORROR SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF WRAITHKIND ON EARTH!



EXAMINE THE QUESTION IN THAT WAY. IF YOU WILL, HUMAN--



-- AND THEN ASK ME IF EVERYTHING IS... "OKAY?"

THERE'S A BURGIN' MIDST THE STURGEON! GUEST STARRING:

ALPHA-FLIGHT!